

Many parents come to us as a resource for choosing appropriate books for their children. The following are a few articles on the importance of choosing books. Also we have shared a few recommendations for some great reads.

## **Choosing Just Right books**

Reading at home should be a positive experience for both you and your child. Providing time to reading and having books available are keys to your child's reading success. Your child can learn a great deal about reading from hearing you read aloud as well as from reading to you. You can support your child by providing opportunities to read alone and with others.

To help your child choose a book that is "just right," encourage him or her to:

- read the back of the book and ask, "Does it sound interesting?"
- look at the table of contents and ask, "Can I predict what may happen in the book?"
- talk to someone who has read the book and ask, "Would you recommend it?"
- flip through the book, looking at the print, pictures, and organization, and ask, "Does it look like a book that will keep my interest?"
- read the blurb about the book?"
- read the first page and ask, "Is it written in a way that is interesting to me?" and "Are there too many words that I don't understand?"

# Choosing a Child's Book

By: Children's Book Council (1995)

Choosing a child's book is a match-making process because not all children will love the same books. These guidelines for choosing books for children of different ages will help you find books that are right for your child.

Here are some basic points to keep in mind.

## **Babies and Toddlers**

- \* Very young children are attracted by brightly colored pictures of simple objects.
- \* They are listeners, and respond well to books with simple texts and good rhythms.
- \* Wordless books stimulate them both visually and mentally, and encourage them to create their own stories.
- \* They are delighted with board books and cloth books, which have the virtue of being practically indestructible.

## **Preschool and Kindergarten**

- \* Mother Goose, nursery stories, and other books depicting familiar objects and experiences are enjoyable to children in this age group.
- \* These children like listening to slightly complex texts with good rhythm and effective word repetition.
- \* They are also coordinated enough to have constructive fun with toy-like books that may pop up, move, or provide other astonishments.

## **Early School Years (Ages 5-8)**

- \* A few children may learn to read before they are in the first grade. Most learn during first grade. Many learn even later.
- \* For reading to or with children, select picture books with strong storylines and character development.
- \* For the child who is reading independently, choose a book with a straightforward story employing words that will be familiar

from everyday use. Some publishers produce books, generally called "easy readers," which independent readers often enjoy.

\*Third-graders are often able to handle stories of some complexity. The vocabulary should be relatively familiar while including some challenging words.

\*A lot of informational books have been published for the early grades. These non-fiction books encourage children to read about topics that interest them and to satisfy their curiosity about complex subjects.

### **Older Children (Ages 9 and up)**

\*Consider who the child is his or her personality traits and personal preferences when choosing a book.

\*Make a selection with the child in mind; choose an informational book or a novel in an area of specific interest.

Publishers sometimes indicate on the cover of the book the age level or grade level for which they think that book is most suitable. Don't hesitate to choose a book that may be suggested for someone older than your child. If a book is beyond a child's reading ability, it can be read to him or her now, and later on by the child.

It is also possible to find picture books that because of the subject or artwork will be just right for an older child. An interesting story in a beautiful, well-illustrated book offers the child an aesthetic experience to enjoy over and over again.

Some children's books have become classics. Many have great appeal and should be a part of everyone's reading experience, especially if a young reader is at the right age for a classic. Classic stories are often excellent selections for the family to read aloud together. Some children find a contemporary book more appealing than a classic: think of the child's reading enjoyment and select books that will appeal to that child.

Young people love paperbacks. Reprints of hardcover titles for every reading level are widely available as paperbacks. In addition, there are many children's books published originally and only in paperback formats. Most paperbacks for children are reasonably priced.

In conclusion, a fine book is not necessarily the most lavish or most expensive book on the shelf. It is a book that is written and designed well. Take more than a few minutes to look at the books read them or

passages from them. A book is an unlimited investment in the human mind and spirit. Its selection deserves thoughtful attention.

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Excerpted from: *Choosing a Child's Book*. (1995). [\*Children's Book Council\*](#).  
**(Ages 5-8)**

The following are links to some great book recommendations.

[http://www.wayland.k12.ma.us/lib\\_media/elemsumread.html](http://www.wayland.k12.ma.us/lib_media/elemsumread.html)

### Choices Booklists: Children's Choices (International Reading Association)

This is a booklist with a twist: Children themselves evaluate the books, and provide reviews of their favorites. Since 1974, Children's Choices have been a trusted source of book recommendations used by teachers, librarians, parents—and children themselves.

[http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/cc2007\\_bookmark.pdf](http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/cc2007_bookmark.pdf)

[http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/cc2006\\_bookmark.pdf](http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/cc2006_bookmark.pdf)

### Choices Booklists: Teachers' Choices (International Reading Association)

Since 1989, the Teachers' Choices project has developed an annual annotated reading list of new books that will encourage young people to read. These are books that kids will enjoy—and that contribute to learning across the curriculum.

[http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/tc2007\\_bookmark.pdf](http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/tc2007_bookmark.pdf)

[http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/tc2006\\_bookmark.pdf](http://www.reading.org/downloads/choices/tc2006_bookmark.pdf)